

Michigan NETStalk

Michigan Network of Employers For Traffic Safety

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Stay Clear of Deer All Year, Especially in the Fall! New Deer Crash Coalition Video Focuses on Driving Cautiously in Michigan



If a crash with your vehicle and a deer was unavoidable, would you know what to do?

According to a survey of 612 state residents conducted in

June for the Michigan Deer Crash Coalition (MDCC), one-third of the respondents said they would not know what to do or would take the wrong action, endangering themselves, their families or other drivers.

"No one wants to see a deer destroyed, but striking the animal is often the safest action," said Coalition Chairman Richard Miller of AAA Michigan. If a crash with a deer is unavoidable, the MDCC recommends these steps:

- Don't swerve
- Brake firmly
- Hold on to the steering wheel
- Come to a controlled stop
- Pull well off the road, turn on emergency flashers and be cautious of passing traffic
- Do not attempt to remove a deer from the roadway unless you are convinced it is dead. An injured deer's sharp hooves can easily hurt you

New Video Available

"Stressing these points is a new informational video entitled 'Stay Clear of Deer All Year' that the MDCC has produced to educate all motorists, and especially student drivers, to exercise extreme caution in each of Michigan's 83 counties," Miller said.

The new video defines the scope of the problem in Michigan and what motorists should do if they encounter deer in the road.

An EPIC/MRA survey, conducted for the MDCC and analyzed by the University of Michigan Transportation Research Institute, found that the public ranks car-deer crashes just below drunk driving, road rage and speeding in importance.

Deer are in every Michigan County and car-deer crashes are a problem in each of them. In 2000, there were 65,006 reported car-deer

crashes, down 4 percent from 67,669 in 1999. However, due to unreported crashes, the total is estimated to be closer to 80,000.

That means that on average there is one car-deer crash in Michigan about every eight minutes. One in seven of all reported crashes involve a deer. And 80 percent of all car-deer crashes occur between dawn and dusk on two-lane roads.

In 2000, eight motorists—four of them motorcyclists—were killed and more than 2,100 persons were injured. Car-deer crashes account for an estimated \$130 million in repairs, injuries and other expenses each year. The average crash causes about \$2,000 in damage, usually to the vehicle's front-end, often leaving it undrivable.

Studies show that while swerving to avoid a crash with a deer may seem like the right thing to do, it is often the worst thing to do. Police statistics show very few persons are injured by simply striking a deer. Most serious injuries and deaths occur when drivers swerve out of control and hit a fixed object, like a tree, crash with an oncoming car, or roll over.

Michigan is deer country, and the best course of action is to drive defensively and follow these tips:

- Fasten your safety belts. They are the best protection for yourself and your family in the event of a crash.
- Drive with caution all-year round in deer habitat, especially on rural two-lane roads.
- Deer can dart out from any direction without warning. Deer often travel in single file. If you see one whitetail cross the road, chances are there are more nearby.
- Deer are most active near dawn and dusk, and especially during the fall mating season and in spring, when they are on the move to find food, often near roads, where the grass greens up first.
- Be especially alert near deer warning signs. They are placed at known deer crossing areas and alert drivers of the possible presence of whitetails.

Limited quantities of the MDCC video, "Stay Clear Of Deer All year," and a brochure are available at no charge. If your business is interested in receiving a copy please fax your request to the Michigan Resource Center (MRC) at (517) 882-7778 or write to the MRC: 111 W. Edgewood Blvd., Suite 11, Lansing, MI 48911.



NEWS YOU CAN USE

- Seat belt use has reached its highest level nationally, 73 percent, since the federal government began regular national surveys in 1994, according to a study released by NYTSA. The NHTSA report can be located online at: www.nhtsa.dot.gov/people/NCSA/
- A special investigation report on the prevention of rear-end collisions is currently available from the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB). According to the report, in 1999, more than six million crashes occurred on U.S. highways, killing over 41,000 people and injuring nearly 3.4 million others. Rear-end collisions accounted for almost one-third of these crashes. According to the NTSB, given the increasing number of rear-end collisions and the number of fatalities in which commercial vehicles are involved, the slow pace of testing vehicle and infrastructure technology to prevent these crashes is a major concern.
- Safety for older drivers could be enhanced due to changes in intersection and vehicle design, according to the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS). Drivers 85 and older are more than 10 times as likely as 40-49 year-olds to die in fatal multiple-vehicle crashes at intersections. For a copy of *Exploring the High Driver Death Rates per Vehicle-Mile Travel in Older drivers: Fragility Versus Excessive Crash Involvement*, call IIHS at 703-247-1500.
- NHTSA reports that 27 percent of passenger vehicles and 32 percent of light trucks including SUVs, pickup trucks and vans are driven with one or more substantially under-inflated tires. NHTSA's National Center for Statistics and Analysis, which conducted the survey, plans to complete a detailed report on its tire pressure study by the end of 2001.

1935 PA59; 1,100 copies @\$2.86 per copy, total

Annual Drive Safely Work Week Campaign a Success!

The Network of Employers for Traffic Safety designated September 10–14, 2001, as the fifth annual **Drive Safely Work Week**, a traffic safety campaign for the workplace. Michigan NETS was joined by 25 other NETS partner states that promoted this campaign throughout the country. The goal of Drive Safely Work Week was designed to help employers emphasize the importance of driving safely on and off the job and eliminate preventable crashes.



This year's campaign theme—**"Safe Driving is a Full-Time Job"**—focused on the issue of distracted driving which is a major contributor in an estimated 4,000 to 8,000 crashes every day. It's evident that distracted driving is a behavior that needs to be modified to reduce the personal tragedy to employers, employees and their families.

Over 500 businesses in Michigan took advantage of low-cost PR kits that NETS made available to employers across the state. The Michigan Municipal Risk Management Authority went even further by purchasing 200 kits for major association members, urging them to emphasize the importance of safe driving in the workplace.

Michigan Department of Transportation electronic message boards were used on well-traveled state highways to help promote the campaign. The message, "Safe Driving is a Full-Time Job" was viewed by motorists as they traveled along I-75, I-96 and I-94 in the metro Detroit area and north to the Mackinaw Bridge in St. Ignace.

Countless Michigan employers contributed to the success of the Drive Safely Work Week campaign. AAA Michigan involved 50 branch offices and another 40 general sales agencies by promoting DSWW. Richard Miller, manager of Community Safety Services for AAA said, "DSWW campaign is a great way to highlight the importance of safe driving and show employees you care about their safety."

In addition to the dangers of distracted driving, Consumers Energy Company utilized the campaign to educate employees about the danger of running red lights. "This campaign reinforces the company's efforts to put safety first," said Tom Taylor, director of safety and health for CMS and Consumers Energy. "We need to keep our work environment free of traffic crashes. Being a cautious driver is something we should practice daily to avoid potential hazards." Consumers Energy Co. promoted DSWW campaign at their corporate headquarters located in Jackson, MI with approximately 1,500 employees, another 2,500 employees were involved in the campaign in the gas and electric business units from around the state.



Charter Communications, a leading cable company in the U.S. has over 650 fleet vehicles assigned to 23 locations in Michigan that employ approximately 1,300 employees. The DSWW campaign was utilized to increase seat belt use within the company. The baseline belt use rate for employees prior to the campaign was 74.5%. Robert Brietske, regional director of Technical Training, Michigan Region, Charter Communication's said, "After promoting the DSWW campaign and stimulating employees to sign pledge cards to always wear safety belts whether on or off the job, the safety belt use rate climbed to 91.5%. The Drive Safely Work Week campaign provided an excellent opportunity for our company to promote safe driving practices. Our goal is to promote safe driving throughout the year, realizing that safe driving needs to be our focus 52 weeks of the year."

Thanks to all the Michigan businesses that participated in "Drive Safely Work Week." Your willingness to promote traffic safety in the workplace helps create awareness to end preventable, unnecessary and costly traffic crashes that effect our state's workforce.

Be Alert! Stay Awake! Stay Alive!

In mid-September, a mailing including an attractive Be Alert, Stay Awake, Stay Alive 2002 calendar was sent to the Michigan NETS membership. The calendar emphasized the critical issues of sleepiness and fatigue and their dire consequences on driving. The Michigan Center for Truck Safety (MCTS) was responsible for developing this project. NETS urges employers to share this calendar with their employees and place it in a visible area in the work place. For any reason if you did not receive this useful calendar and would like one, please contact Christine Caswell at MCTS by calling 800-682-4682 or e-mail ccaswell@voyager.net.

Nationwide, drowsy driving causes more than 100,000 crashes a year, resulting in 40,000 injuries and 1,550 deaths. As tragic as these numbers are, they only tell a portion of the story. It is widely recognized that drowsy driving is underreported as a cause of crashes. And this doesn't include incidents caused by driver inattention.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) embarked on an effort to reduce the effects that fatigue and driver inattention has on highway safety. While everyone is susceptible to drowsy-driving crashes, shift workers run a particularly high risk. Their natural sleep patterns are disrupted by working nights or long and irregular hours.

In collaboration with National Center on Sleep Disorders Research (NCSDR), NHTSA developed an education program to increase shift workers' awareness of the dangers of drowsy driving, helping them to improve the quality of their sleep and reduce sleepiness, and ultimately, reduce the incidence of drowsy driving.

A workplace education program that really works.

This comprehensive program is specifically designed for businesses and organizations like yours that employ workers beyond the typical "9 to 5" workday. Program materials include a Better Sleep Video, Workplace Posters, Shift Worker Brochure, Tip Card, Employer Administrator Guide with PowerPoint Training Sessions, and a Brochure for Shift Work Families. This program will not only help reduce on-the-job risks, but improve the productivity and quality of life to employees as well.

The materials:

- **"Preventing Drowsy Driving Among Shift Workers" Employer Administrator's Guide**
This guide will help you plan and implement a program to edu-

cate your workers about sleep-improvement methods and the dangers of drowsy driving.

- **Training and Education Sessions**

This training series of six 15-minute sessions is designed to encourage discussion about drowsy driving among workers. Topics include sleep education, the effect of sleep on driving, facts and myths about sleep and drowsy driving, consequences of drowsy driving, gaining cooperation of friends and family, and sleep improvement habits.

- **"Wake Up and Get Some Sleep" video**

This entertaining seven-minute video is designed to kick off your employee education program. The video teaches workers about the importance of sleep, illustrates the dangers of drowsy driving and provides shift workers with ten simple tips for improving sleep.

- **"Better Sleep" Posters for the Workplace**

These six eye-catching posters (each 9½" x 26") are designed to stand out on walls and bulletin boards in high visibility areas such as break rooms, file rooms, cafeterias and hallways. They quickly and memorably deliver a variety of motivational messages to workers about the consequences of drowsy driving and how sleep can improve their quality of life, along with action tips on improving the quality of sleep.

- **"Sick and Tired of Waking Up Sick and Tired?" brochure**

This comprehensive brochure educates workers about the importance of sleep and how it can affect their driving and quality of life. It covers natural sleep patterns, warning signs of sleepiness, consequences of drowsy driving, and myths about keeping awake behind the wheel. It provides workers with a full list of ways to improve their sleep.

- **"A Wake-up Call for the Whole Family" brochure for the family**

This brochure discusses the difficulties families face when living with someone who works shifts or irregular hours. It stresses the importance of quality sleep and explains how workers are at high risk for drowsy-driving crashes. It also provides simple steps that family members can take to help the shift worker get better quality sleep.

To order any of these materials simply log onto the following NHTSA website. http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/people/performance/human/drowsy_driving/order.html





State of Michigan
Department of State Police
Office of Highway Safety Planning
4000 Collins Road
P.O. Box 30633
Lansing, MI 48909



A majority of U.S. Business Report Workplace Safety Delivers a Return of Investment

Liberty Mutual survey shows 61 percent of executives say \$3 or more saved for each \$1 invested in workplace safety

Ninety-five percent of business executives report that workplace safety has a positive impact on a company's financial performance, according to the findings of The Executive Survey of Workplace Safety announced recently by the Liberty Mutual Group, the nation's leading provider of workers compensation insurance. Of these executives, 61 percent believe their companies receive a return on investment of \$3 or more for each \$1 they invest in improving workplace safety.

The survey reveals executives realize the benefits of workplace safety go beyond the company's bottom-line, with 70 percent reporting that protecting employees is a leading benefit or workplace safety.

The survey also helps shed light on the impact that two types of costs associated with workplace accidents are having on U.S. business: direct costs, or payments to injured employees and their medical care providers, and indirect costs, such as lost productivity, overtime costs, etc. Ninety-three percent of executives surveyed see a relationship between these costs, with 40 percent of them reporting \$1 of direct cost generates between \$3 and \$5 of indirect costs.

By comparing the findings on indirect costs with its own research on the direct costs of workplace accidents and illness, Liberty Mutual calculates U.S. businesses are paying a staggering \$155 billion to \$232 billion on workers compensation losses annually.

To view the full report, visit Liberty Mutual's website at:
www.libertymutual.com/about/pressclub/safety_survey.html

Mark Your Calendar! Save the Date



April 30–May 1, 2002

**7th annual Michigan Traffic Safety Summit
Holiday Inn South – Lansing, Michigan**

The 2002 Michigan Traffic Safety Summit will be held in conjunction with the Secondary Road Patrol Conference for sheriff departments. This will increase the number of attendees and the opportunities for networking and sharing information and ideas.

Registration materials will be posted at the following website in mid-January 2002, <http://www.obsp.state.mi.us/summit/summit.htm>. Call Sandy Brown at (517) 333-5301 or e-mail browns1@state.mi.us for further details.

Exhibitors, sponsors and advertisers are welcome!

